



**TOWN OF BELMONT  
PLANNING BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES  
March 28, 2006**

7:00 Meeting called to order

Attendance: Karl Haglund, Chair; Andrew McClurg; Jennifer Fallon; Sami Baghdady; Andres Rojas; Jay Szklut, Staff; Jeffrey Wheeler, Staff

Absent: None

The minutes of March 15, 2006 were approved as submitted.

Committee Updates

Jenny reported no outstanding items that required the attention of the Planning Board were discussed at the recent Capital Budget Committee meeting. She raised the issue of whether there is a real need for a member of the Planning Board to be on this committee.

Sami noted that the Belmont Center Planning Group was conducting their planned charrette on Saturday. All members indicated that they would be attending.

Town Planner's Report

Smart Growth Zoning/Our Lady of Mercy update – Jay attended a meeting of the Oakley Neighborhood Association. The Association was supportive of revitalizing Cushing Square. The Association was concerned with multi-family development of the Our Lady of Mercy site but was very supportive of a two-family development on the site.

**7:15 PUBLIC HEARING: FENCE HEIGHT AT STREET INTERSECTIONS ZONING AMENDMENT**

Karl opened the public hearing. Sami read the public hearing notice. Karl noted that the intent of this amendment was, for reasons of public safety, to control the height of fences and/or hedges at intersections and where driveways intersect streets.

Mary Hitchcock, 18 Harris St., commented on the fence that she had erected along her driveway. She noted that she understood the rationale behind the proposed by-law and agreed with the public safety concerns, but that, in her case, problems between neighbors sometimes could only be resolved with a fence. She felt that there needed to be some flexibility.

The Board felt that the public safety concerns outweighed the issues of neighbor disagreements.

**Moved by Fallon to Close the Hearing  
Seconded by McClurg  
Voted unanimously**

**Moved by McClurg to Recommend Favorably the Proposed Amendment  
Seconded by Fallon  
Voted unanimously**

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**7:30 CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING: SITE PLAN REVIEW 495 COMMON ST.**

**Moved by Fallon to waive the reading of the notice**

**Seconded by McClurg**

**Voted unanimously**

The applicant briefly reviewed the proposed project. This would be a three story building with commercial/retail on the first floor and office space on the remaining floors.

Questions were asked regarding the amount of parking that would be supplied, the amount required, and the amount currently available. The applicant noted that currently there are 27 spaces and the proposed structure includes 22 spaces. The number required by zoning is unknown at this time as the specific uses are unknown. However, the applicant notes that there is a municipal lot that is underutilized abutting the property.

Sue Bass, 530 Concord Avenue, commented that there is a parking shortage in Cushing Square.

The applicants referred to the 2002 parking study which noted a surplus of spaces. A discussion on parking in the square, utilization of the municipal lot, and the needs of the proposed development followed. Staff was requested to bring in details of the study and municipal lot utilization for the next hearing.

Andy Rojas commented on the proposed design of the building and landscaping issues. He asked if a landscape plan could be presented and whether the design could be given further consideration.

Jay also noted that the applicant will need to present a drainage plan or substantiate that the Stormwater runoff would not be significantly changed as a result of the new building.

**Moved by Baghdady to continue the hearing to April 18<sup>th</sup> following the close of the other hearings on that date.**

**Seconded by Fallon**

**Voted unanimously**

**9:15 CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING: CONTROVERSIAL SPLIT ZONED LOTS ZONING AMENDMENT**

Karl re-opened the hearing.

Abutters of the property at 6 Willow St. commented that they supported rezoning of the lot to residential.

No property owners were in attendance.

**Moved by Baghdady to Close the Hearing**

**Seconded by Rojas**

**Voted unanimously**

**Moved by Fallon to Recommend Favorably zoning changes as proposed on the controversial split lots**

**Seconded by Baghdady**

**Voted unanimously**

#### 9:40 Wetlands By-law

Members of the Conservation Commission discussed several recent changes to the proposed by-law. They also noted that they were waiting for comments from the attorney representing McLean Hospital and would incorporate those comments.

Sami asked how many properties would be affected by the by-law. Again, no definitive number was given but the con com members estimated that less than 5% would be affected. Sami then asked whether the new by-law would prohibit construction of a deck in the expanded resource area. He was told that it would.

The Board was concerned that the final version of the by-law was not yet available and felt that they needed to review a final version prior to any action on the part of the Board. The Chairman then requested the item be placed on the April 18 agenda.

#### Town Planner's Report (cont.)

Cushing Square Rezoning – Chris McVay presented the proposed agenda for the meeting with residents abutting Cushing Square.

Open Space Plan – Jay noted that the Town's Open Space Plan would expire this summer and that 5 year update was required. Development of the plan is the responsibility of the Planning Board. There is a volunteer from the conservation commission who has begun reviewing the Plan. Karl volunteered to work on the update with Jay.

10:40 Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: Tuesday April 18, 2006  
Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room  
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm

*Approved 4/18/06 by unanimous vote.*